

Linking Land Conservation & Affordable Housing Projects

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<http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs/default.htm>



Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

COMMON GOALS

- Finding \$\$
- Preserving community character
- Long-term restrictions -- both interested in perpetuity
- Alternative to sprawl subdivisions (smart growth)
- Constituent building
- Use of CPA – can be catalyst for AH/LC projects

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

BENEFITS OF JOINT PROJECTS

- Broader community buy-in
- Leveraging funds/making projects more affordable
- Can do more small projects that are financially feasible/can scale project to budget/parcel/community
- Shared knowledge
- Having land conservation advocate for affordable housing and visa versa

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

ROADBLOCKS TO JOINT PROJECTS

- Timing & money (project by project issue)
- Education not there yet
- Adding affordable housing puts damper on land donations and vice versa
- Opponents to housing always find reason to criticize a project
- Complexity: more attorneys etc/. difficult to adhere to state requirements
- Donations come with difficult restrictions
- Lack of experience by municipal officials – tough enough to do projects separately
- Need to develop visionaries – need a local visionary in small case studies

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

ROADBLOCKS TO JOINT PROJECTS

- Land trusts fear/lack of trust of developers
- Big difference between large and small projects
- Land trusts need to see small natural resource loss with small fraction to affordable housing -either some frontage or better a cluster to keep views across frontage
- Visibility of process: land trusts work with small groups around the kitchen table – affordable housing projects include a broad public process
- Process: need to start working on agreements on the process before a parcel is found (or Chapter 61 ROFR comes)
- There is little affordable housing expertise and more land conservation expertise where land is still left and the reverse where there is little land left

Four Key Challenges to Urban Land Conservation

1. High cost of land/lack of funding
2. Misperception (is it worth protecting small disconnected parcels...)
3. Lack of local capacity
4. Need for conservation tools and strategies

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

STRATEGIES/SUGGESTIONS

- Start education before deal is set
- Look in Open Space Plans for joint project ideas; consider a “friendly” Ch. 40B
- Use Chapter 61 process to develop joint deals
- Develop or connect with visionaries
- Develop model deal/structure
- Encourage small developments – connect small scale developers with land trusts

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

HOW TO FIND PARTNERS FOR PROJECTS

- Bring people together with track records
- Work with local non-profits for affordable housing
- Work with Mass non-profit housing organizations
- Work with C.D.C's
- Use CHAPA as the umbrella for housing
- Use MLTC as the umbrella for land conservation
- Encourage regional non-profits (resistance within towns)
- Some local C.D.C.'s (Boston/Worcester) have had many successes and they feel their job is done - joint deals may be new avenue for them.

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

RESOURCE NEEDS

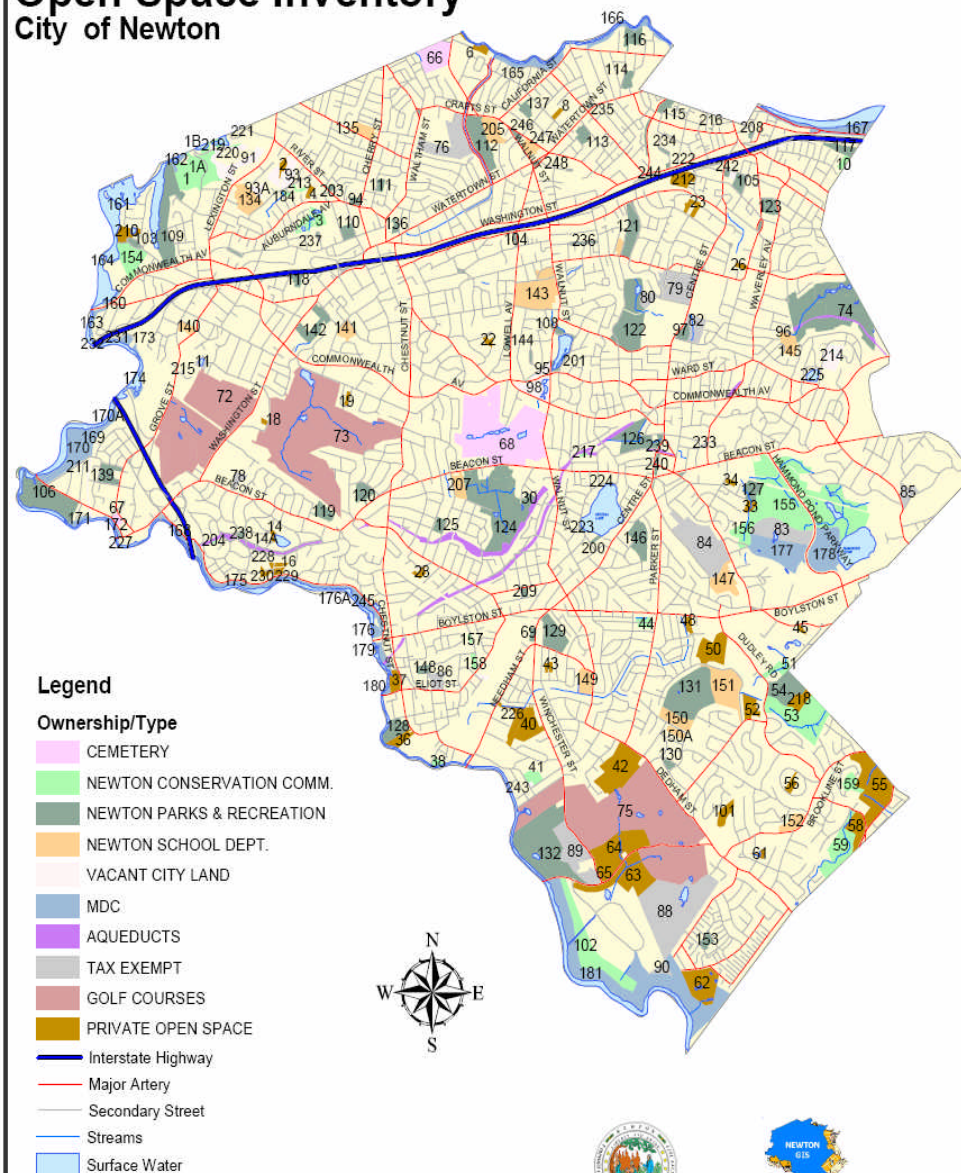
- Money
- Coordinating plans - open space plans - must refer to affordable housing plans and community character and affordable housing plans also should include open space issues
- Accessibility to visualization modeling tools
- DHCD tool kit great start as clearinghouse to find more information – also use Mass Planners list serve
- Create funding sources for joint projects
- Many towns have open space revolving funds - need affordable housing revolving funds
- Training for Community Preservation Committees on creative ways to use CPA funds for joint projects

Summary of May 4, 2006 Focus Group

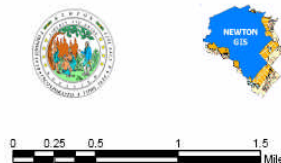
ACTION ITEMS

- Use circuit riders (Like Essex County)
- Provide connections and continuity – this effort is a long-term one
- Change Ch 61 Right of First Refusal rule - need more than 120 days
- Create a funding pool of \$ 200,000-500,000/project to do small joint projects
- Municipalities and non-profits should gain control of land, and then develop RFP to clearly identify provisions for both affordable housing and open space
- Hold bigger meeting (2nd focus group) in Central MA - focus on specific topics – have it sponsored jointly by CHAPA and MLTC

Open Space Inventory City of Newton



SOURCES:
Open space information compiled by the Newton Planning Department. All other map features are from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). Contact the GIS Administrator for further details.



MAP DATE: February 27, 2003

Lawrence, MA Park Equity Analysis Priorities



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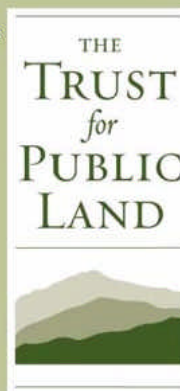
This map shows the City of Lawrence, MA with the park equity analysis priorities. Areas in orange have a moderate conservation, while areas in dark red have a high conservation priority.

Thanks to the following Data Providers:
the City of Lawrence, UEL, and Mass GIS.

Map created by
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on June 24, 2006.

Created in ESRI ArcMap 9.1®
Map Projection: NAD 1983 State Plane
Massachusetts Mainland FIPS 2001 Feet

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Lawrence, MA Overall Conservation Priorities



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Legend

	Parks and Open Space		Overall Conservation Priorities
	Waterbodies		Low
	Roads		Moderate
	Interstate		High
	Highway		
	Major Road		
	Railroad		

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This map shows the City of Lawrence, MA with the overall conservation priorities. Areas in orange have a moderate conservation, while areas in dark red have a high conservation priority.

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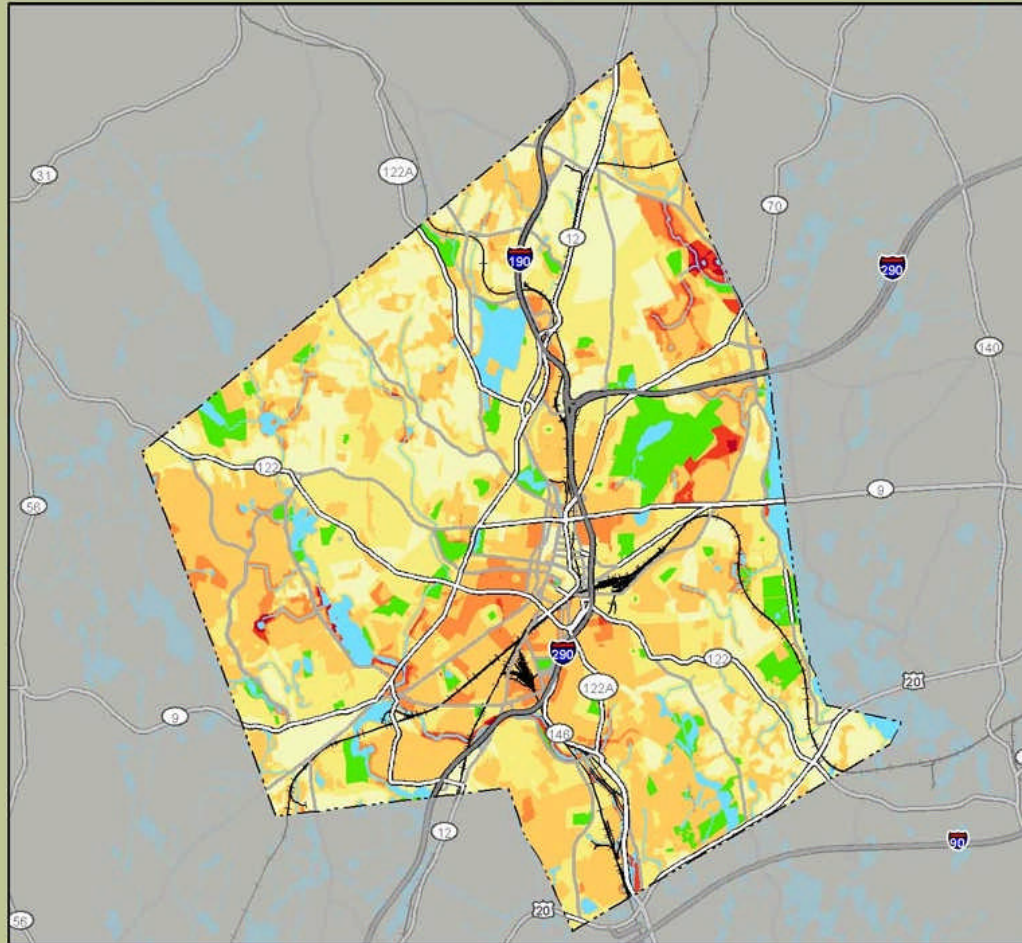
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Worcester, MA Overall Conservation Priorities - Cities



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Legend

City of Worcester

Parks and Open Space

Roads

Interstate

Highway

Major Road

Railroad

Overall Conservation Priorities - Cities

Low

Moderate

High

This map shows the City of Worcester, MA with the city overall conservation priorities. Areas in orange have a moderate conservation, while areas in dark red have a high conservation priority.

Thanks to the following Data Providers:
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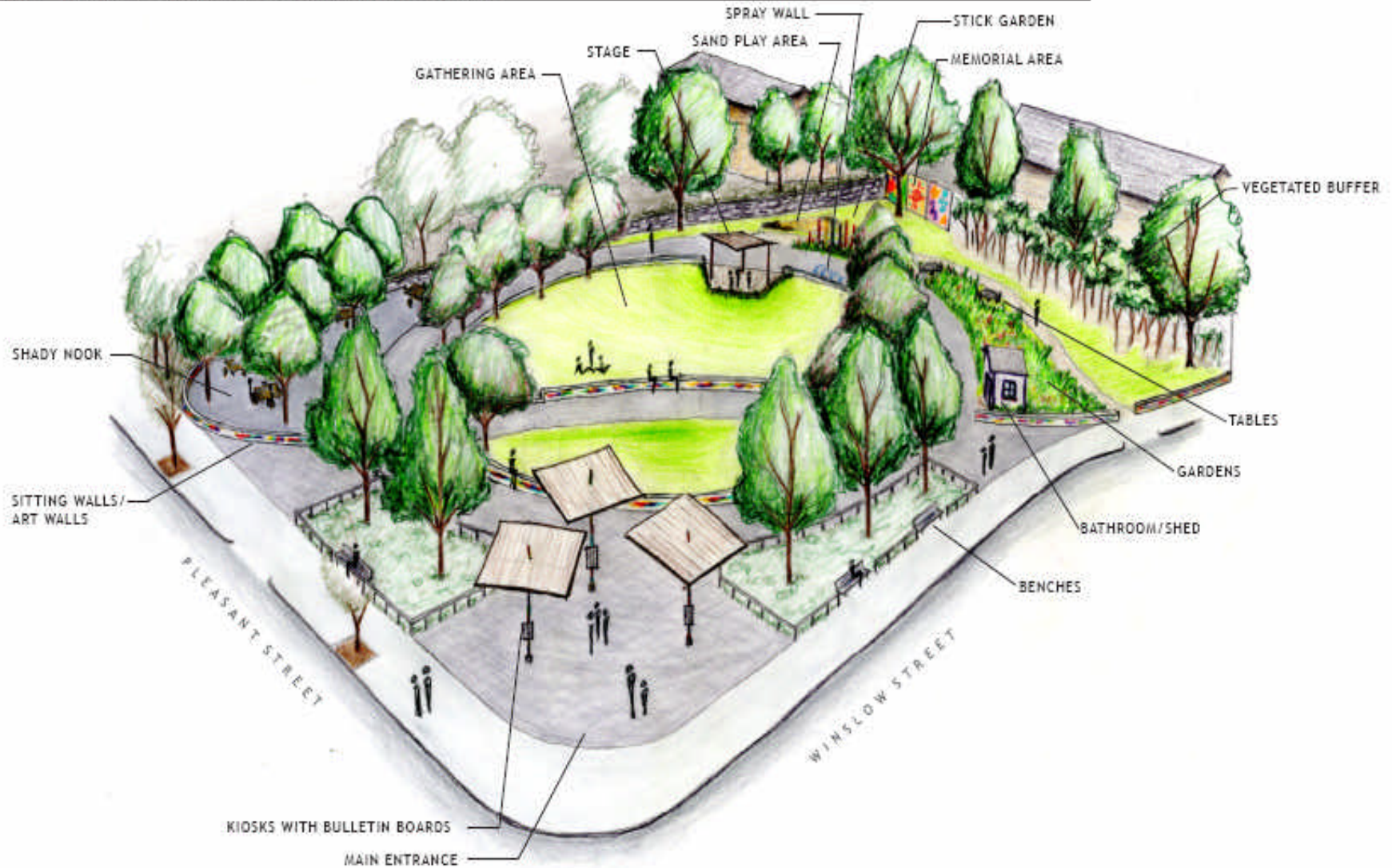
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FINAL PLAN - AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



WINSLOW PARK DESIGN - WOMEN TOGETHER, WORCESTER, MA
 EMMA COOKE, HANNAH WHIFFLE - CONWAY SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The Point



Photo: Herald News